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The Soft Touch

As an item of humanity the American public will welcome the release of the 1,113 prisoners taken by the Castro regime in the Bay of Pigs invasion last year. That these men may be restored to their families is one pleasant sidelight to an affair which otherwise has brought only frustration and humiliation to this country. It would be a relief to close the chapter at this point, but history builds upon history. Cuba is still with us. It cannot be swept behind the door, like the debris of simpler misadventures. Even in noble causes, the American people have no stomach for dealing with tyrants, and a man who can place a \$82 million ransom on the heads of a thousand prisoners is a tyrant. However compassionately this transaction is viewed, its terms will be examined closely. If there are misgivings about buying off the dictator, they can be understood: the principle is alien to the American nature.

Let Castro make no mistake. If there is softness in the American heart, it is for the oppressed and not for the oppressor. His day will come again, not in callow youths floundering ashore in rout, not in silly, half-serious subterfuge. In his own good time Castro will fall, and for his saving there will be no ransom.

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